

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EGEN, UNGA, US, NI

SUBJECT: ARIKPO PRESS CONFERENCE AT UNGA

REF: USUN 1354

1. SEVERAL NIGERIAN PAPERS CARRY REPORT IN APRIL 18 EDITIONS ON ARIKPO PRESS CONFERENCE (PRESUMABLY SAME ONE REPORTED REFTEL AND WIRELESS FILE) STRESSING CRITICAL REMARKS

ABOUT SECRETARY KISSINGER'S SPEECH.
IN CONTRAST TO POSITIVE TONE OF WIRELESS FILE EXCERPTS, LOCAL VERSION INTERPRETS ARIKPO REMARKS AS "BLAST" AT US POLICY AND SUGGESTS HE PRESENTED KISSINGER SPEECH AS "THREAT" TO DEVELOPING NATIONS. ONLY QUOTE CARRIED BY LOCAL PRESS WAS AS FOLLOWS:
"IT WAS A BRILLIANT SPEECH, BUT I SAY VERY FRANKLY THAT THE SITUATION IS SO DESPERATE IN MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES THAT THEY ARE COMPLETELY INSENSITIVE TO THREATS; THEREFORE, A SPEECH WITH AN ELEMENT OF THREAT WILL NOT BE HELPFUL." ACCORDING TO PRESS, ARIKPO ADDED THAT SECRETARY "SHOULD NOT HAVE TOLD PRODUCING COUNTRIES

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NOT TO COME TOGETHER TO NEGOTIATE PRICES."

2. LOCAL AP REPRESENTATIVE TOLD USIS THAT AP CORRESPONDENT AT UN AND POSSIBLY OTHER NEWSMEN HAD FOLLOW-ON SESSION WHICHARIKPO AFTER FORMAL PRESS CONFERENCE, AND HYPOTHESIZED THAT QUOTES REPORTED ABOUT UNGA HAVE COME FROM THIS LATER EXCHANGE. HE CONFIRMED THAT QUOTES CARRIED BY LOCAL PRESS WERE INCLUDED IN AP DISPATCH ON ARIKPO PRESS CONFERENCE, THOUGH NIGERIAN PAPERS PRESUMABLY DREW THEIR STORIES FROM REUTERS FILE TO WHICH THEY ALL SUBSCRIBE.

3. COMMENT: THOUGH USIS HAS CIRCULATED WIRELESS FILE STORY TO ALL MEDIA ONLY ACCOUNTS OF ARIKPO NEWS CONFERENCE THUS FAR CARRIED BY PRESS ARE LIMITED TO HOSTILE OBSERVATION REPORTED ABOVE. WHILE PRESS INFLUENCE ON FMG POLICY MAKERS LIMITED, UNFORTUNATE STORY OF THIS KIND INEVITABLY CONTRIBUTES TO SOURING ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH THEIR DECISIONS ARE TAKEN AND MAKES TASK OF EXPLAINING USG POLICIES THAT MUCH HARDER. LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING UN SUMMARY OF PRESS CONFERENCE PROMISED REFTEL, AND HOPE IT WILL ENABLE US PLACE OFFENDING QUOTE IN PROPER CONTEXT FOR OUR INTERLOCUTORS.
REINHARDT

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